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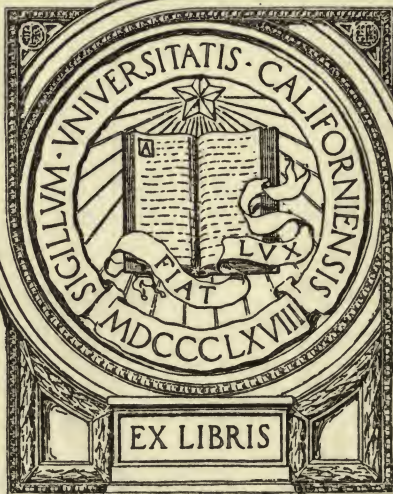
SOUL AND SENSE

By


Hannah Parker Kimball

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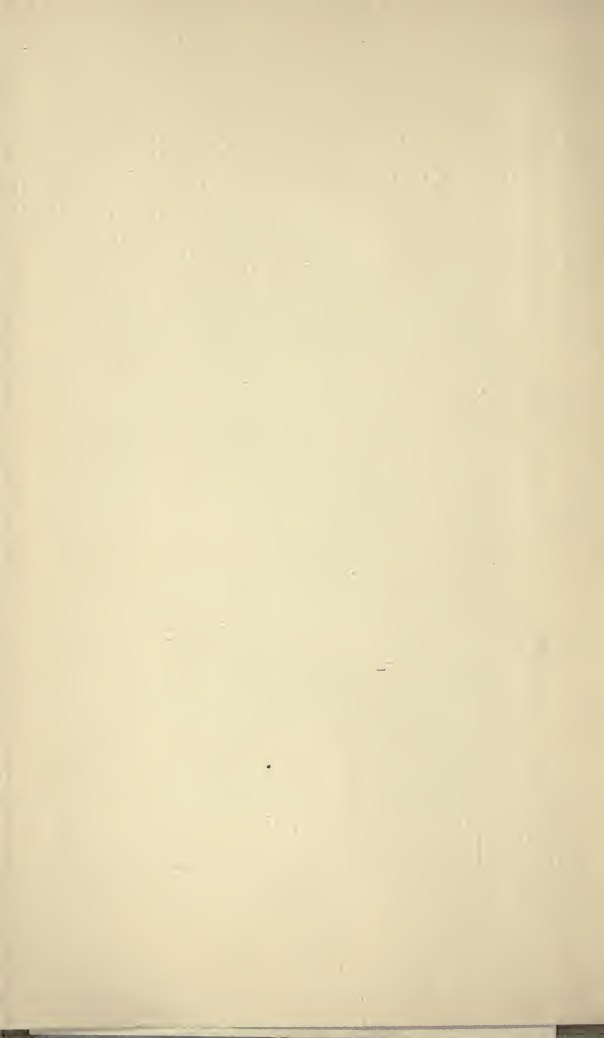
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OATEN STOP SERIES

IV

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SOVL&SENSE
BY HANNAH PARKER
KIMBALL



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The lines given under the heading, "Earlier Pieces," were originally printed in a small volume entitled "The Cup of Life." For permission to reprint a few of the poems in the first section of "Soul and Sense," thanks are due to *Scribner's Magazine*, to *Harper's Weekly*, and to *The Chap-Book*.

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SOUL AND SENSE AND OTHER VERSES



SOUL AND SENSE

MYRIADS of motley molecules
through space
Move round triumphant. By their whirl-
pool pace
Shall *we* be shaken? All in earth's
vast span,
Our very bodies, veer to other shapes;
Mid the mad dance one stubborn power
escapes,
Looks on, and marvels, — 't is the soul
of man.

CONTRAST

ROUT and defeat on every hand,
On every hand defeat and rout;
Yet through the rent clouds' hurrying rack
The stars look out.

SOUL AND SENSE

Decay supreme from west to east,
From south to north supreme decay;
Yet still the withered fields and hills
Grow green with May.

In clod and man unending strife,
Unending strife in man and clod;
Yet burning in the heart of man
The fire of God.

REVELATION

IN dreams my head is sunk between
The daisy and the fern;
I gaze into the deeps of Heaven,
To me their blue repose is given;
And when the clear stars twinkle keen,
Their secret spells I learn.

I hear Time fiercely pulse about
This earth's re-echoing shell;
I hear through space the eager rush;
And then I feel God's mighty hush
O'er-topping Time's loud coil and
shout,
And know that all is well.

THE SMOKE

And when I wake a vision clings,
And wheresoe'er I go,
Mankind is taller by a crown
Of light, that drops from Heaven down,
On gently sliding, silent wings,
With silvery fire aglow.

THE SMOKE

DOVE-WINGED against a tender,
turquoise sky
The white smoke flits; or through the lam-
bent air
Quivers to fading, violet spirals fair;
Or shifts to grey, curled upward heavily.

It rises in strong, twisted columns high
From grimy funnels, flecked with fitful
flare;
Or through the planks of creaking bridges
bare
Sifts a swift, sinuous way to trail and die.

The still, vast skies are background for its
strife;

SOUL AND SENSE

'T is like man's yearnings mounting from
man's pain,
Seeking the tranquil Heavens waveringly:

Earth's ceaseless clash and clangor give it
life;

'T is like man's prayers that, born of toil
and strain,
Trail, — and are lost in God's immensity.

THE HEART'S DREAM OF GOD

THERE came a shape; men said,
“'T is Reason bright.”

Can Reason be so ruthless, so severe?
It slew my pretty flowers with a blight;
It crushed my budding leaves as well as
sere;
And left my garden drear.

There came a wind, and “Doubting” was
its name.

It blew and blew, my rose-leaves tore
and cleft;

THE SEEKER

And whirling round, a giddy, empty game,
It heaped much dust about, and more
bereft

My poor, bare garden left.

Rejoice, my heart! What? On the tram-
pled sod

Bowed down, poor foolish thing, and
sobbing low?

It seems to think it was its dream of God
That made the fountain in the garden
flow,

And even the roses blow!

THE SEEKER

I AM a diver,
Into the deep of man's nature I dive;
Ah, but there live there
Monsters that sleep, that wrestle and strive.

Wonders of thinking,
Marvels of passion, breed there and thrive;
Find I, deep sinking,
Glorious in fashion, flowers alive.

SOUL AND SENSE

Patient, at leisure,
Onward, still on, through the green whirl,
Seek I one treasure,
Priceless alone, seek I the pearl.

I am a diver
Into the sweeping, into the swirl;
Of all that may live there
Cognisance keeping; — but where is the
pearl?
Ah, where is the pearl?

THE FALSE QUEST

IN youth, “Let us arise, take sail,” we
say,
“Over blue seas to find out happiness;
There is a purple island, far away,
Where life beneath the sun is shadow-
less.”

The torn sails flap, the rudder is undone,
The bright hulk rots that our young vis-
ions bore;
That purple island sleeps not 'neath the sun,
And still we wander on a shadowy shore.

MAN'S TRIUMPH

MAN'S TRIUMPH

WE call unto the gods; our cry
Clamorous ascends the sky.
Ever the gods incline them and reply:
"Fight on in darkness; struggle to be
brave;
Battle with evil; wrestle for the right;
Fight on in darkness; Heaven's is the
light;
Man's triumph is in darkness to be brave."

WHAT WONDER?

AH, if the soul know all, yet is held
blind
And dumb by thwarting ligatures of flesh
Bound o'er wise eyes and strong lips wisdom-curved,
What wonder it so often fails to find,
In blindman's holiday, this life's mad mesh,
Its clue to blindly conquer this blind world?

SOUL AND SENSE

HOW LONG?

OPRODIGAL of blood, and pain,
And conflict, (since the human soul
Thereby emerges free from stain,) —
Who never countest stress and dole: —
How many spans? what strife? what strain?
How much of Thine eternity,
Ere, pierced with truth again, again,
Our souls, unswerving, turn to Thee?

POPPIES

GLEAN through the field, dread Lord,
Thine is the field.
Lo, here are blazing poppies, every one
A drop of blood-red joy that I have won;
And other flow'rs than these the field shall
yield.

But His eyes seek the grain. Nay, Lord,
refrain.
May not the flow'rs suffice Thee? Woe,
His eyes

ROUGH COPY

That seek the grain!—How bare each
furrow lies!—

I know not, Lord, —the poppies choked
the grain.

ROUGH COPY

A H life, rough copy of the life sublime
The soul lives on her hill-top high
apart;

Blotted and blurred with poor, distorted
art!—

Yet God stoops down to read the scrawl
of Time.

TWO POINTS OF VIEW

I

A LL this costly expense
For a few white souls forgiven,
For a smiling throng of a few elect,
White harpers harping in Heaven.

SOUL AND SENSE

II

Lord, Thy glance is wide,
And Thy wide arms circle the whole,
Shall out of Thy net of loving glide
One wand'ring human soul?

WHEN ALL WAS SAID AND DONE

I

THIRST for the personal pang, the
sacrifice,
Made all his wide, bright leisure seem a
maze
Of tiny discords, intricate, shrill; and he
Who could not lose himself in fancies,
faced
The passion-pure Madonna's rose-leaf
cheek,
The Sun-god's body's perfect grace in-
tense,
And all art's wealth of shameless, chosen
joys,

WHEN ALL WAS SAID

Chilled by a secret hunger. His smooth
books
Lied, telling him that life was wondrous
well.
Before red sunset-glows, where poplars
prim
Pricked the pale pain of evening's sallow
cheek
Into great wrath and fierceness, ear astrain,
He heard a wandering cry, and thought the
sky
Blushed brutally for murder in the streets.
So he stood forth, and drank the fiery cup
This Judas-life wrings out for those who
strive.
His heart dashed up its pity and revolt,
Crimsoning the very stars; his voice grew
shrill.

II

After long years of fever and demur
A curious dumbness took him. Wistful-
eyed,
He did not struggle then; he softly lived,
With deprecating nods and faded smiles

SOUL AND SENSE

As sweet as withered rose-leaves. Yet if
one
Lifted a violent voice to storm for truth,
To goad for good, he spake, and gently
said,
With yearning eye, and loyal, trembling
lip;
“Strive, brother, strive, but strive in God’s
own peace,
Strive in great peace, because God made
the world.”

A CERTAIN POET

HOW his fearful lips were shaken,
By the faltering song he sung!
By the thunderous tide of living,
How his inmost soul was wrung!

How the clamorous voice of Babel
Smote him like a naked sword!
How his eyelids longed for darkness,—
Eyes had seen the living Lord!

Still before him rose the vision,
Robed in light from heel to crown,

DAY-DREAMERS

Still he saw the Lord of life,
And all his quaking soul bowed down.

And he sung, with shaken lips,
And voice that quavered in his awe,
Shrill, amid his hurrying heart-beats,
Sung the Presence that he saw.

DAY-DREAMERS

LIKE those that wait for messages
they stand;
And Time sweeps by.
Far, far away they see a golden band
Against the sky.

Far, far away, from some song-haunted
grove,
Sweet notes they hear,
Astir with silvery strains of certain love, —
But nothing near.

Strange flutterings from afar the light breeze
brings,
Now quick, now slow;

SOUL AND SENSE

An airy strife of vast and distant wings
Their spirits know.

Yet never touch comes near them, never
light,
No strain draws nigh;
Far, far against the sky the glory bright;
And Time sweeps by.

A PRIMITIVE WORSHIP

IDUG and dug in desert sands,
The wilderness could see
My faintness, and the thing my hands,
Striving, upturned for me.

O gross-lipped idol, trembling vows
Have hovered round your lips,
And woven a halo round your brows
Of somnolent eclipse.

Drift, desert sands, drift o'er this head,
This cruel head of shame;
Hide it from sight; — let not the dead
Even suspect its name.

THE SOUL

THE SOUL

ISIT beside the borders of my soul;
Upon the glancing surface, to and fro,
The swift-winged thoughts and bright im-
pressions go.

But most I love to gaze far, far below,
Where budding fancies grow,
And through the crystal vistas, shoal on
shoal,

Swift feelings dart, mysterious currents
flow;

The while the quickening breeze sings low
to me:

“Vast is thy soul, ay, boundless, like the
sea.”

THE DEEPS OF SLEEP

UNDER the waves of the deeps of
sleep

(Fathoms deep, fathoms deep),

Let me lie on the ocean's bed

(Cradlèd, cradlèd),

SOUL AND SENSE

While the deep sea's swirl swings over me
(Tenderly, tenderly),
And I know of naught save that swaying
 sea,
And that ocean's harmony.

THE REFUGE OF THE IDEAL

OUR souls are sick for permanence;
 this world
Shifts wearily on creaking poles through
 space;
No atom stays, no friend; there is no place
Where man may rest a heart through tran-
 science whirled.

And we are sick for permanence. We
 know
Too well how cities sink upon the sands; —
Yet far away one cloud-tipped city stands
Secure, and through it ever, to and fro,

Surges a voice that cries: "Ye sons of
 care,
Frequent, with hearts appeased, my gleam-
 ing walls;

UNFITNESS

Tread my white streets, and hear your sad
footfalls
Rise deathless music through my radiant
air."

O to attain this city of our quest,
This luminous shelter for our souls' unrest!

UNFITNESS

OLORD, how are we fit to live,
Since bartering life for greed of sense,
And cheating faculties divine
Create to reach Thy inmost shrine,
We lose Thy finer consequence?

THE SOWER

TURN up the clods, O Sower, lank
and thin.
What dost thou sow therein?
The spindling trees look on; some languid
sheep,
Like spectres grey, amid the stubble creep.

SOUL AND SENSE

The fields are wide. What rank crop
sow'st therein,
Fierce farmer, bone and skin?
The blackened stumps like outraged vic-
tims rise,
And toss wild arms protesting to the skies.

“Small, potent seeds, rich seeds, I sow
therein,”
Quoth he, with sallow grin;
“Small seeds, so dark, and smooth, and
rich I drop;
Black little seeds. They make a mighty
crop; —
They grow,” laughed Sin.

THRALLS

IN what dark age, by what nefarious fate,
Was this thing consummate?

The altar stands upon a hollow mound;
We circle, reeling, round.

Uprises in grim hideousness the god;
Our feet a path have trod.

THRALLS

Around its neck hang dangling, precious
things,
It gleams with glittering rings.

Its monstrous, sallow cheeks are streaked
with red,
As if our hearts had bled.

Its locks are lank, it hath an evil leer;
Alas! what do we here?

We, as we wheel, with kisses burnish bright
The ghastly, gruesome sight,

Till the brass glows like gold, and down
below,
Our blood and sweat-drops flow.

Outside the temple beat the lofty trees, —
Against such walls as these!

They whisper through the windows; and
aghast,
The birds fly madly past.

SOUL AND SENSE

Woe! woe! Will no one break the rank
and file,
Cease worship of the vile?

No one starts forth; and round in empty
show
We, faintly reeling, go.

In what dark age, by what nefarious fate,
Was this thing consummate?

THE NATION

STRONG is the nation. High her
splendid brow
The vast Republic rears above the seas,
Crested with clamorous cities, row on row,
Where once calm Nature's old, prophetic
trees
Whispered together, as the fitful breeze
Brought on a white, a timid-fluttering sail.
Now loud, strange powers vociferously
prevail,
Thick breaths resound, and shrill shrieks
multiply,

THE NATION

And burdened prows dip low with many a
bale; —

And He hath blessed us with prosperity.

Free is the nation. Free from hoary fears,
From phantoms of earth's king-encumbered
past,

It glitters, glitters on its golden piers,
A throbbing mart, a roaring warehouse
vast,

Thrilled by an eager life respiring fast.

O strange fulfilment of the Pilgrims'
scheme

When every brow bears Plutus' brand!

We deem

The highest excellence plutocracy; —

And liberty? An ancient, austere dream,
Since He hath blessed us with prosperity.

Faithful the nation. On the savage beach,
Beneath the brooding boughs our fathers
bent,

The rock their altar; and their God to
reach,

Ere they to splendid duties simply went,
Through the blue air their fiery souls they
sent,

SOUL AND SENSE

And dreamed who knows what Spirit-touch
to feel? —

And we? We are their children. See, we
kneel.

The same hot zeal and fierce sincerity
Our yearning vows to the gold calf
reveal; —

For He hath cursed us with prosperity.

THE CHRIST-CHILD ALONE

IN the long pageant of man's destiny,
A sweep of sunburnt country and a hill,
Where sits a little child to watch the sky. —
O little Jesus, wide-eyed, charmed, and still,
How doth thy hushed, expectant, wonder-
ing will

Commune with blade, and flower, and
startled thing

That flits across thy path on timid wing?
What thoughts, what dreams, what hopes,
what fantasies,

Doth yon vast sweep of radiant heavens
bring?

In thy child's brain loom what strange
images?

SINNERS AND RIGHTEOUS

SINNERS AND RIGHTEOUS

THE man is wronged. Ay, is he
wronged or no?

He hates, at least, and hatred is his means
To frantic love, — the love of his revenge.
This creeps at night and clasps him by the
throat,

And clings about his panting, laboring
heart.

He fingers steel and cons in his hot brain
The words that are most keen to stab and
kill.

Above all gifts he hungers for the hour
When his rapt soul shall feed, in vulture-
wise,

And be appeased, because the foe lies
prone,

Slain at the promptings of his cruel will;
Since the gnarled soul finds slaughter ex-
cellent.

The evil woman suns her by her door.
Her net is spread beside her. In the house
Are piles of spoil, a gleam of gaudy wares.

SOUL AND SENSE

Once, long ago, she sat beside a stream,
And pranked her curls and glanced into
the stream.

A hunter stepped across the brook, and
gazed

Into her shallow soul. Those eyes of hers
Turned his to smouldering fire. In her lap
He tossed a ring. The sunlight from the
brook

Fled to the ring; the gem flashed out; she
saw

Its leaping fire blend with his burning
eyes.

Such gems, such looks, to her seem ex-
cellent.

How bright the hue of gold! How warm
it is,

The gleaming gold! It crackles and it
burns

Upon the heart of him who loves it well,
Like fire on a hearthstone. More and
more

Must go to feed this fire, content this
flame,

Stronger than love of women in its power.
And yet ambition's guerdon is the best,

SINNERS AND RIGHTEOUS

High up a seat, and under either foot
The neck of something human, 'neath the
throne
The throb of million hearts; and then to
stretch
A head that looks so little 'gainst the blue,
And make the earth's face alter! — This
is best.

These are the men and women! Then
behold,
Robed in pure white, before a spotless
shrine,
A priest who drops his sacrifice, and turns,
Strides through the splendid temple to the
gate,
And sets himself, a pillar, in a strife
Of creatures with hands crisped to hurt and
kill.
Calm on the mount, with hands out-
stretched to bless,
Arms spread upon the cross wide to em-
brace
And compass half a world, to Thee a life
Epitomizing all that man can spend
In loyalty to Good seems excellent; —
And beauty nestles earthward like a dove.

SOUL AND SENSE

THE OLD INCONSISTENCY

THE world was at her feasting, when
the world
Fled wildly forth, with drunken eyes
astare;
Behold for toasting, at her glittering board
Christ took a vacant chair.

The world was at her ruling, when a cry
Of fear rang shrilly from her perjured
throat;
For lo, Christ, entering in the polling
booth,
Would count the city's vote.

The world was at her trading, when she
groaned,
Lest once again the whip of cords were
whirled
And panic raised; the Christ, wide-eyed on
change,
Affrayed the money-world.

IN PRAISE OF PAIN

The world was at her loving, when her
cheek

From burning red turned to a ghastly
pale;

In the dim brothel, where her love was hid,
Christ raised the silken veil.

The world was at her dying, nearly spent,
Her failing strength could scarcely breath
afford;

When turning, weeping, on her clammy
bed,
She called on Christ the Lord.

IN PRAISE OF PAIN

POTENT is pain,
Goodly the flower
Blooming in myriad thorns through the
quivering brain,
Thrusting triumphal its roots through
the tissue that lives.

Mighty the host,
Palpitant, pierced; —

SOUL AND SENSE

Greatest the one in the purple who suffered
the most;
Splendid the scarlet of wounds in the
hands and the feet.

Heaven a-wing,
In rays from the Throne; —
Glory of light round a Godhead, whose
seraphim sing
Of pain triumphant, compassionate, inly-
imposed.

BEAUTY FOUND

HE was so near, so near he almost caught
Her flying robes, he thought.

When lo, a rasping, grievous voice out-
broke;
A creature clutched his cloak.

He saw two eyes, deep haunts of misery,
Gaze on him piteously.

THE VISION OF THE FATES

He struggled 'gainst their pleading, yet he
turned,
Compassion in him burned.

He stooped, he soothed and smoothed the
hideous head;
Last he embraced the dead.

Sudden, full-orbed, within his arms he
caught
That Beauty that he sought.

THE VISION OF THE FATES

CIRCLING the caldron of life,
Cluster the Fates in a ring,
And fierce is the frequent, bubbling strife
Of the caldron strange as they sing:

“Change, change, change,
Since the life of the planet began;
Change, change, ever change,
Through plant, and through beast, and
through man;

SOUL AND SENSE

“Change, change, change,
Since the sands of the ages have run;
Change, change, ever change;
Will the changes then never be done?

“Change, change, change; —
But we sing, for but lately we saw,
Amid the fumes of the caldron strange,
A Vision of Perfect Law.”

And the fumes of the caldron rise,
As they circle about in a ring,
With worship and awe in their glittering
eyes,
Half-hid by the smoke as they sing.

CONSUMMATION

THE Lord of the centuries said,
To the primitive woman who dandled
her babe:

“Love it well, love it well;
Who can tell, who can tell;
Love it living, and love it dead,”
The Lord of the centuries said.

AWAKENING

The Lord of the centuries said,
To the wild, wolf-like man in the shadowy
cave:

“Shield the child, shield the wife,
With thy blood, with thy life;
Shield thine own, shield thine own, be they
living or dead,”

The Lord of the centuries said.

The Lord of the centuries said:

“I have sown me a marvellous, fruit-bearing
seed.

Love shall grow to the cross,

Till man love his own loss,

Love my love after Me, after Me, heart
and head. —

Ah joy, my joy!” the Lord of the centuries
said.

AWAKENING

HEAVEN is a state of fine resolve, I
deem;

And shall he breathe in Heaven who never
drew

SOUL AND SENSE

His soul's breath deeply, as enraged to do,
Drunk with some glimpse of God's consummate scheme?

O we are never saved until it seem,
In some mad moment, that the Truth is true,
Inexorable, insatiate to pursue,
Hem us around, and hurl us from our dream; —

Then find our souls fit allies marshalling,
A Heaven alert for our awakening.

A NEW DRINKING SONG

DRINK of my wine, O God;
Thou know'st the feet that trod
The groaning press; the hands were also
Thine
That hewed the clusters with the sword,
To make this wine of mine; —
Drink to the lees, O Lord,
Drink of Thy wine.

REALITY

REALITY

THE rough, bare sides of stern reality
I clasp, to them I cling,
Too close for song.
Once from a golden goblet full of gleams,
I poured me streams of dreams;
But that was long ago, — how long!
Slow God unveils the massive peaks of
stone,
The chasmed cliffs, to these I turn alone,
For these alone are strong.
As ivy clings, God's stern reality
I clasp, to it I cling.

PRAYER

I

IN mine own hell, mid tools to torture
me,
Forged by myself long since, unwittingly,
I sit me down to pray.

SOUL AND SENSE

The beckoning shadows, sloping on the
wall,
Make all things living, sinister, and tall,
In mine own hell.

Sometimes a molten fire sears my face;
Then o'er my naked hearth the chill winds
race,
And whistle shrill.

Sometimes I feel dog-memory's shrewd
bite;
Then nothing visits me the livelong night,—
So dark, so long!

I am aghast at the grim hush and gloom,
At the ghost-haunted precincts of this
room,
Of mine own place.

Yet in mine hell, mid tools to torture me,
Forged by myself long since, unwittingly,
I sit me down to pray.

PRAYER

II

No more mine eyes peruse the shadowy
floor,
Nor fasten wildly on the barrèd door,
For help delayed.

Sweet peace now seals them, and I know
such thrills,
As when fresh hope the twigs and blossoms
fills,
And spring is here.

Toward me flows rapture; such a rush of
life,
Giving the lie to fear, to loss, to strife,
Hell is not hell.

So in mine hell, mid sights to madden me,
Learning how God may find and gladden
me,
I sit me down to pray.

SOUL AND SENSE

THE WHOLE

A SOUL may wander through dim shades
of night,
In doubt and darkness dense, in pain and
dole;
Yea, sin and pain may bow to loathsome
plight
A soul.

Yet could our faint eyes grasp the wondrous
whole,
See life emerge through failure into might,
As swims the cloud-rid moon from pole to
pole,

Should we not see, through darkness, bane,
and blight,
God drawing to Himself, Himself the goal,
Through shifting shadows, to the perfect
light,
A soul?

THE SAVED

THE SAVED

THOUGH ye shift, O times, as the
world spins round,
Swift as the waters turn and drift,
What care we, who the word have found,
Though ye shift?

We have found the word that fills the rift
In the lute of life here over the ground,
We can list to the strain, and the meaning
sift;

Whispered in Heaven where joys abound,
Breathed by the winds as the light leaves
lift,
Taught us by God. We shall hear the
sound,
Though ye shift.

SOUL AND SENSE

CLIMBING

WITH thee to climb to, I could
scale
The skyey, topmost towers of Heaven
above;
With thee to climb to, could I fail
To reach clear heights where radiant pow-
ers prevail? —
With thee to climb to, love?

PURITY

IF I should bathe me for a thousand
years,
O love, my love,
In crystal fountains full of cleansing tears
Of saints above;
If I should pray,
And beat my breast, and fasting day by
day,
Weep bitterly;
As pure as you are pure I could not be,
When, at still eventide, unto the light

REPOSE

You lift your eyes to watch the swallow's
flight,
Lost in the sky's unfathomed mystery,
Where God may be.

REPOSE

I THANK you, love, for your supreme
repose,
Slow-moving grace;
You bring a dream of clinging hands that
softly close
An instant's space.

You move as in the green-hung forests sway
The happy boughs;
One seems to feel leaf-touches light, that
flickering, play
On burning brows.

And when you raise your calm and stead-
fast eyes,
Our soul-pangs cease;
It is as if the fair, unchanging summer skies
Had spoken: "Peace."

SOUL AND SENSE

BETHESDA

WHAT though I dragged me to the
pool alone?
Crowded with other cripples round its brink?
What though, by propping me against a
stone,
I somehow found the strength to stoop and
drink?
Of what avail to strain, to strive, to sink? —
In Heaven God's pity woke and gave me
thee;
O love more true than this poor heart can
think,
Stooping, thou stirredst the pool of life
for me.

ESTRANGEMENT

IF death had intervened to whisper, "Nay,
No farther!" But not thus she slips
beyond
My world of word, and look, and musing
fond, —
Invisible, and just across the way.

ASLEEP

No other life than this life laps her round;
I can suspect the sunshine shining there
In warm caress upon her braided hair;
Her head turns gracefully at some quick
sound.

Into some book her slender finger slips
To mark her reading; through her house-
plants bright,
Green, delicate rays touch her calm cheek
with light,
And linger on the straight line of her lips.

The welcome of her grey eyes goes — *her*
way —
To greet some chance incomer. Ah, sad
heart,
Lost exile from her where she sits apart, —
If death had intervened to whisper, “Nay!”

ASLEEP

UNERRINGLY as swallows seek the
South,
In sleep my thoughts, unerring, fly to thee;

SOUL AND SENSE

By day I chide them for audacity;
By night they know thy hands and feel thy
mouth.

Alas! they may not stir thy life-stream deep,
Yet let them skim the current of thy
dreams.

How fly they? Nay, I only know it seems
Thy cheek is laid to my cheek, — being
asleep.

DREAM-MUSIC

IDREAMED we sat in silence, she and I.
Long, long the stillness brooded. Where-
fore speak
Since words are poor and weak?

— At last I saw upon a shelf close by,
A viol small and graceful, such of eld
The kindly masters held.

Into my hands I took it eagerly.
The tones were brief and broken, low and
pained,
As if by dread restrained,

DREAM-MUSIC

As my love for my lady still must be.
Yet my soul entered in the instrument,
O'er which I trembling bent,

So that at last I knew not, verily,
Whether I swept a viol or my heart
For her who sat apart.

Then with set lip, with large, dilated eye,
She whom I loved leaned toward me, fall-
ing fast
Her pitying tears at last;

Herself was in her look, and all for me.
I held, possessed her; rang out every string
With keen, triumphant ring.

One broke at length. Her eyes turned
heavily.
Was it a viol or my heart string broke?
What matter? I awoke.

SOUL AND SENSE

IMPERFECTION

APPLES of friendship, not earth's warm-
est sun
Can make you perfect? Tainted, every one?
Yet taint and all, I needs must find you
sweet,
And — lest I starve — stretch forth my hand
and eat.

LOVE'S THRIFT

IN the merry month of May,
Let young Love go wood-cutting.
Do you ask why such employ
For this saucy, lovely boy?
Dear, it is not always May.

Down his shafts and crossbow gay,
For a hatchet let him fling.
See the fagots piled with care
By his fingers debonair,
While the woods ring loud with May.

FORGET-ME-NOTS

Rough Love's labor would you say?
Dear, when angry blasts would sting,
He must keep our hearthstone warm,
Though without us howl the storm,
And it is not always May.

FORGET-ME-NOTS

THE valley is in shade, for hills rise high
Like gaping jaws with sharp and jagged
teeth,
That mutter threats against the impassive
sky,

And overawe the cowering spot beneath.
About the summits clings a twisted sheet
Of ghostly snow, and ever in a wreath

Of formless mist, of gusty, drifting sleet,
A vaporous breath uprises icily.
Amid the crags the flocks forlornly bleat,

And up and down their hoof-tracks heavily
Score the old slopes of herbage faint and
rare.

Down in the valley, creaking ceaselessly,

SOUL AND SENSE

Grows one dark pine. What bird would
ever dare
To perch upon its sapless boughs of want,
Or sing by yonder hovels grim and bare?

Crushed 'neath cold roofs of stone, laid all
aslant,
Anchors to stay them 'gainst the winter
dread,
These huts seem tombs men's wraiths alone
should haunt.

The road winds by them as in haste it fled
To leave such dim, sad thresholds in its
wake; —
Yet by the ditch-side, mid the sorrel red,
Bloom blue forget-me-nots, for love's sweet
sake.

LOVE'S MIRACLE

LOVE'S MIRACLE

LOVE, work thy wonted miracle to-day.
Here stand, in jars of manifold design,
Life's bitter waters, mixed with mire and
clay,
And thou canst change them into purest
wine.

LOVE IS KIND

LOVE abhorreth not the cross,
Even the cross;
Truest love avoids not loss,
Courteth loss.

Love is patient and resigned,
Still resigned;
Being akin to God in kind,
Love is kind.

SOUL AND SENSE

FAIR THOUGHTS OF LOVE

FAIR thoughts of Love loom over us
like birds,
And brood upon our lives and nurse our
days.
These are the agencies, the genial powers
And wingèd things of Fate.
These angels search our very hearts. Their
words
Tremble through chaos; countless subtle
ways
They find to instigate our drowsy hours
To fellowship with God.

FROM PERSONAL TO UNIVERSAL

SEE how the circles widen, till they meet
The world's far-distant verge, with ten-
der stir:
And even the world's dim, distant shores
are sweet,
Because (O Love, the Lord!) I think
of her.

LIGHT

LIGHT

HE wills we may not read life's book
aright,
Wrest from each awful line its meaning
clear,
Till we have bowed to read it by the light
Of pallid tapers on some true-love's bier.

THE SPIRIT THAT AFFIRMS TO THE SPIRIT THAT DENIES

THE incurable hoper smiled: "Saved,
saved at last!"
"How?" cried the doubter, that grim
sceptic base
Who haunts us, fearful questions on his
face.
"By dying," gasped the other as they
passed.

SOUL AND SENSE

TESTIMONY

“**H**IS end,” we say. Ah, foolish words
and weak
We dare to whisper whenas God would
speak,
Yea, utter speech from death’s black portal
grim: —
“Shall man not live, since *I* have lived with
him?”

THE CHILD AND SORROW

WITH never a thought of the morrow,
Into the greenwood wild
Wandered a gleeful child;
Saw there a quivering shape,
Nerveless and terrible-eyed;
“Who are you?” cried the boy.
“Sorrow,” the shape replied.
And lower the clear birds sung,
As her ominous voice replied,
And slower the green leaves swung: —
Till sudden the wood was stilled
By the pang that her deep eyes filled.

SURPRISAL

“Sorrow, sorrow, sorrow!”
Carolled he, shrill and light,
Turning to butterflies bright.
Awfully starting away,
Crooning low like a Fate,
Awfully Sorrow frowned:
“I can wait, wait, wait,”
So her dolorous descant ran,
“I can wait, wait, wait,
I can wait till the child is a man.” —
Sobbed the green leaves round his head
Like mourners who sob for the dead.

SURPRISAL

WE have known slack threads in life,
vain, vacant hours
That brittly broke from off Fate's rattling
reel,
In tag and tatter;
Far out of reach hung our accustomed
powers,
We could not lift the shield nor wield
the steel; —
Ah well, what matter?

SOUL AND SENSE

Ah, what if Death (ere the tranced soul
awoke)

Had stolen on us with stealthy steps, as
thus

We dozed in the sun?

And grinning like a showman with his joke,
Before God and His angels ushered us,
Ashamed, undone?

OLD AND YOUNG

CHILDREN and old folk greet us on
the road

As we ride onward. Trailing his long goad
Beside the ox-cart, the bowed peasant grey,
The bent old woman crawling from the
field,

Dragging the scythe her arms no more can
wield,

Give wistfully, "Good-day."

The baby, striving in the door to stand,
Pleased with our jingling mule-bells, waves
his hand,

Not us to greet, but life. The old muse
thus:

AN IMPERIAL RELIC

“Who knows if our dim eyes shall e’er
 behold
Another traveller?”—With grimaces cold,
Death peers at them through us.

AN IMPERIAL RELIC

THE church is old and dim. The
 sacristan,
With tremulous murmurs, waves us to a
 room
Of chilly masonry and daylight wan.

There by a press, slow-fumbling in the
 gloom,
He lights his dusty lamp, with unction
 strange,
While we look on, too idle to assume

A faded interest. Now he throws a range
Of doors agape; the swiftly leaping light
Begins its riot inward. Lo, the change!

SOUL AND SENSE

What pomp is here? Our listlessness takes
flight
Before the splendid crucifix, the shrine,
The grey saints' skulls enriched with rubies
bright,

With emerald eyes ablaze around a sign
On a pale scroll, — the mark of Charles
the Great,
Strong hieroglyph, that strides amid the fine

And priestly script of Alciun sedate,
Above a seal, indented by the end
Of the king's dagger-hilt of ponderous
weight.

Over the symbol breathlessly we bend;
The whitewashed room grows reverend and
vast.

It is as if we, too, must needs descend,

As Otho did, through the majestic past;
And in a death-vault's dimly-lighted space,
Some ancient grave-digger, with look
aghast,

A MODERN SIR GALAHAD

Raising a coffin-lid, with old grimace,
And trembling hand, half paralyzed and
weak,
Had bared the Emperor's sepulchred face,

With color still in the stern brow and
cheek.

A MODERN SIR GALAHAD

THIS is Sir Galahad. Clear from the
mist
Of the past we can see him, gracious, fair;
The lips that the Spirit loved and kissed;
The halo of palely golden hair;
The brow to the light of the vision bare.
But a doubt to the depths of his bright soul
creeps,
And Sir Galahad weeps.

Is it Sir Galahad? Forged to endure
This armor; these are his true young eyes;
These are the wasted profile pure,
The eager hands that should grasp the prize,
The voice that should thrill with the glad
surprise;

SOUL AND SENSE

But a doubt to the heart of the Knight is
come,
And Sir Galahad's dumb.

Himself he has questioned: "What is the
grail,
That by the vision should be revealed?"
He has waited. Alas, now visions fail!
So he mounts his steed and takes his shield,
And now he fares through town and field;
Since doubt has entered Sir Galahad's
breast,
The Knight cannot rest.

Poor Sir Galahad! Visionless Knight!
The other knew visions; — ah, happy he!
But for thee, who seekest the mystery
bright,
Full of agony, bend we the knee
And pray that thy soul its hope may see, —
Even if it come with thy latest breath,
And through that revealer whom men call
Death.

THAT DAY

THAT DAY

OHOLY day, how still shall be their
tread

That bear me out from the loud halls of
life,
From where the conflicts rage, the feast is
spread!

I can endure, can steep me in the strife,
Since mid life's jars thou wait'st unwearied,
Calm, holy day,— the day when I lie dead.

DEATH THE LOVER

DEATH, let me grip thine hand.
I cannot understand

What Life is buzzing to me, bending low,
Low by my listening ear; —
But thou art plain, thy speech is calm and
clear,
Certain thy brief command.

Death, let me know thine arm
Shall shield me from Life's harm,
Tell me again thou waitest still beside,

SOUL AND SENSE

Beside yon low-browed gate; —
True lover, so in steadfastness to wait,
In patient, perfect calm.

Do, Life, thy silly best,
Tempt on some frantic quest
Poor souls with piping preludes; — ever
Death,
Death waits by yon yew tree,
And strong and imperturbable is he,
And in his arms is rest.

THE FADING OF THE LIGHT

IN limpid light the glacier's silvery flow
Flashes to splendor; half way down the
height,
Dark pines turn vivid, clothed with mellow
might;
And, lava-like, the stream pours fire below.

Above the ice-peaks, lucidly aglow,
The slow sun lingers; fine-spun cloud-
shreds bright

THE VOICE OF DEATH

Dapple the radiant air and swim in light,
Till sinks the orb. Now outlines vanish
slow;

First at our feet the flow'rs grow faint and
wan;
Then calm, dread fading out from peak and
tree
Of light the eye still clings to, lapses on;

While to the heart pierces, with night's
chill breath,
Presageful knowledge of the hour of death,
When from us light shall fail inexorably.

THE VOICE OF DEATH

LOVE of the dead hath wrought in me
some shame.

My sins besiege, beset me, without end;
My being falters like a slender flame
Rocked by resistless currents, fain to
bend,
To call on some strong name.

SOUL AND SENSE

In lieu of that I dreamed to be the whole,—
The vast mechanic rise and fall of law,—
I feel strange eyes that fasten on my soul,
Strange shapes that pluck my garments,
and would draw
To some dear-purchased goal.

Great Death hath passed this way, his noise-
less tread
Hath shook the very centre of my heart;
His hand once laid upon my shrinking head,
Hath left a brand that never shall depart;
I mind me what he said:

“Dost thou yearn after him hath come with
me?

Then listen, thou: —
There is one law, one hope, one destiny,
For then and now.
Wouldst thou be near him, touch his golden
hair,
See his calm face,
And know his heart-throbs? One sole road
leads there.

To my still place
Full many pathways wander, full of gloom,
One, only one,

THE VOICE OF DEATH

Leads where he lives, to that clear, radiant
room

 This soul hath won
Through loyal love; love's yoke he bore
in life

 With lofty cheer; —
Shalt thou, O faithless, find through love-
less strife,
 His presence dear? "

Death's voice goes echoing on. Mid dark-
ened graves

 I seem to stand, and ever closer wind
The shapes about me in strong, eddying
waves.

 How shall I find my dead? How ever find
That reverent love that saves?

I stumble in the darkness, every breath

 Drawn gasping in thick twilight all about.
Is here the pathway? Naught the dim night
saith, —

 But through the dark those shapes that
find me out,
The echoing voice of Death.

SOUL AND SENSE

RUMOR FROM BEYOND

AH, heavy leisure of a cureless grief!
Yet while earth grows unreal, from undreamed spaces
Dim, shadowy figures slant their solemn faces,
Their deep eyes splendid with appeased belief.

Close to the heart, this light throng whispereth
A rumor. Swift as darts the skimming swallow
The quick breath finds the heart's death-chamber hollow,
The silvery strain smites through the hush of death.

Transfusing yearning's bitter discontent
With promise of large doom, ethereal voices,
Make music, for a hidden hope rejoices;
Thrill, for the heart shall yet give back assent. —

AFIELD

And, "Peace," they breathe, "a peace
unstained of strife;
Life for the dead, undying glorious life."

AFIELD

IHAVE gazed upon the earth with happy
eyes;
I have given their due to blossom, blade,
and tree;
Beneath my feet the great field's golden glee
Flees up to where grey, gaunt old fences
rise,

And bar its flight in zigzag, clinging-wise,
Lest on the shadowy hills' immensity
Of purple shade, it rush, impetuously,
To scale yon blue tranquillity of skies.

Here quiver, on the nut's sun-dappled bole,
Red squirrel-flanks; there cheeps a swal-
low's bill;
Mid-field a robin pauses, perks, is still.

SOUL AND SENSE

An ecstasy of life thrills through the whole.
Now my eyes float with clouds, having
 climbed the hill,
And floods of quenchless light my being fill.

SUN, CARDINAL, AND CORN FLOWERS

WHENCE gets earth her gold for thee,
 O Sunflower?
Her woven, yellow locks so fine
Must go to make that gold of thine.

And whence thy red beside the stream,
 O Cardinal-flower?
She pricks some vein lies near her heart
That thy rich, ruddy hues may start.

And whence thy blue amid the corn,
 O Corn-flower?
Her deep-blue eyes gleam out in glee,
The glories of her work to see.

STILLNESS

STILLNESS

THIS morning it was very still.
Like wild-rose petals cloudlets lay
In the wide hush; there was no thrill
Of any leaf-point; far away,
The burnished mirror of the bay
Reflected, in clear depths aglaze,
The tranquil-tinted cheeks of day,
Half drowsing through a cobweb haze.

CRAGS ON THE HUDSON

LIKE fierce, impetuous lions rushing
fast
To lave their burning feet, then suddenly,
Stopped, turned to stone, they stand im-
movably,
Their crests upreared to Heaven, as in a last,
Mad howl of grim despite. Bare to the blast
Their wrinkled crowns, but down below a
ring
About their captive feet the earth hath cast
Of delicate verdure redolent of spring.

SOUL AND SENSE

THE PLACE IS CHILL

THE place is chill as it were night;
Inexorably the keen winds bite;
High in this mountain's solitude,
Stripped of the valley's wavering mood,
We feel all Nature's brutal might.

Rough boulders span the stream; in fright
It hurries on, its surface white
With lingering foam; with spray imbrued
The place is chill.

Yet look toward yonder peak's bare height;
Grey walls still cling to that grim site.
Here, then, with stalwart hearts endued,
Men once braved Nature's menace rude. —
How few the blocks still left upright!
The place is chill.

TORPOR

TORPOR

THIS afternoon life's good word trails
its wing;

I know not where to find a rumor kind.
The hills are shrivelled, and no bird will
sing,

No bush will bloom, no brook will speak
its mind;

Life fails for torpor, and swift-footing by,
A fierce wind plucks the last leaves faint
and dry.

THE HEART OF MAN

IWAIT the word of destiny that shall
explain,

The word inexorable that shall impart.
Meanwhile the sun drifts o'er the glittering
plain,

The lily's chalice gleams, the swallows
dart;

There is not anywhere a hint of pain; —
The pain for all the Universe is in my
heart.

SOUL AND SENSE

SUNSHINE ON THE LAWN

UPON the lawn lie floods of yellow
light,
And yellow puffballs, downy, soft, and
round,
The dandelions make the greensward
bright;
Upon the lawn lie floods of yellow light.
Above are yellow butterflies in flight,
Gay sparks of light that flicker from the
ground;
Upon the lawn lie floods of yellow light,
And yellow puffballs, downy, soft, and
round.

AUTUMNAL PEACE

THESE still, translucent, and embalmèd
days,
The emblazoned splendors of the silent
wood
Send to the very soul, in subtle ways,
Calm benedictions phrased in quietude.
Uplifting is the blue pond's fearless mood

SUNSET

Of frankness flashed to Heaven. The mind
is stilled
To follow flights of birds; the heart fulfilled
By calm, pervasive chorals' gentle strife,
Tender, restrained, on lambent air distilled
In drifting dirges of submissive life.

SUNSET

AS the sun drops low,
Let us turn and go
Through the still, old town, to the place
Where the grey bridge lies,
And the church towers rise
Against a turquoise space.
Against a fold
Of the sunset's gold
(For the sunset is gold to-night),
Stark poplars stand
On the near mainland,
And bathe their peaks in the light.
Betwixt the bridge
And the mainland's ridge
The basin is full of fire;
'T is smooth and still,

SOUL AND SENSE

And down from the hill
The tinkle of bells draws nigher.
From a grassy side,
To the pool's calm tide,
The cattle straggle to drink
Of the flame-colored stream,
And the orange gleam,
That tinges the water's brink,
Makes flame their flanks
'Gainst the shining banks,
Where the golden bubbles wink,
As the sun's broad rays,
In a jewelled blaze
Of royal colors, sink.

THE BATS' REVEL

LIKE a stronghold frowning,
Armèd men might enter,
High the hillock crowning
At the grey town's centre,

Stands the old church massive,
Bare, save from one corner
Juts a shape impassive,
Saint, or knight, or mourner,

THE BATS' REVEL

Lady, page, or squire,
None can now discover;
All the windows higher,
Ivy covers over.

Dropping blossoms yellow,
Crowd fair lindens blooming;
And around stand mellow,
Peaked old houses looming,

Gables piled together,
Rising high and higher;
Moonlight, this clear weather;—
Then from the church spire,

Into space out-sweeping,
As the moon shines clearer,
Myriad bats are keeping
Revels queer and queerer,

Whirling in strange manner
From this Christian steeple,
Worshipping Diana,
Scandalizing people!

SOUL AND SENSE

THE RUNE OF THE WIND

OUT of limitless acres of space
Flutters a voice, to die or obtain;
Out of mystery's dwelling-place; —
Is it breathing of rapture or pain?

O thou, aloft like a witch in the air,
Now in the east and now in the west,
Canst thou not lisp us the lifelong quest?
Murmuring sayings of sibylline eld,
Babbling messages blindly spelled,
Tossed in the north and tossed in the south,
Breathe us life's spell with thy lipless mouth,
Pray the ineffable prayer.

Prophet of mysteries, visions rehearse,
Chant us the rune that we hunger to read;
For Hell incommunicate voices we need,
For Heav'n such anthems speechless and
vast;
Piercing the future, possessing the past,
Recount us transcendence, — grandilo-
quent, come!
Words avail us not. Lo, thou art dumb, —
Yet thou speakest the Universe.

THE SWALLOW

As waiteth the earth for thee we would wait,
Straining in stress at the sound of the sweep
Of thy rapturous intoning, cadenced, deep;
Trembling in hush at the tingling thrill
Of thy delicate whisper small and still; —
Immersed in brightness, involved in gloom,
Voice of man's latent, searchless doom,
Thou inarticulate!

Out of limitless acres of space
Flutters a voice, to die or obtain;
Out of mystery's dwelling-place; —
Is it breathing of rapture or pain?

THE SWALLOW

HIGH in the air the swallow wings,
Darts and swings; —
And the red sun's anguish is in the west.
The red sun reaches the swallow's breast,
The warm, white breast is dyed by the west,
A dazzling red-gold is the breast.
And now he wings,
Darts and swings,
A palpitant sunbeam, borne on wings.

SOUL AND SENSE

TRANSFORMATION

THE waters in resistless flow
Give themselves over to the fall;
Torn into spray they fume below,
As if the extent of fate to know
Against the cliffs' impassive wall.

But when close by, 'twixt boulders high,
Avoiding harm with steady wing,
Yon wood-dove white soared suddenly,
This wild place thrilled to ecstasy,
And came to pass a wondrous thing.

The vista'd cliffs appeared a nave,
The blue sky shone a painted dome,
The dove winged on men's souls to save,
And 't was God's Love, a torrent wave,
Swept through this church in awful foam.

EARLIER PIECES



THE OUTSIDE SKY

SHALL I live in piles of masonry?
Shall I sit me down in my palace of
sense,

And cognisance take, and mastery,
Of every wonder brought from thence,
From hither and yon, by my senses fine,
And heaped up high in this palace of mine?

Fair is the palace, O, fair to see;
Carven with figures gay is the wall,
And hung with storied tapestry;
And I could be happy here withal,
But that out of the piercèd windows high
I can just catch a glimpse of the outside sky.

SOUL AND SENSE

A COMMON MIRACLE

SOMETIMES we lie awake, too spent
to weep,
Longing for rest as deserts long for rain;
Wondering what spirit stirs the tired brain;
Why the poor heart should weary vigil keep;
Why night withhold the pleasant touch of
sleep
From our pale eyelids; murmuring: "Life
is pain;
O for that rest that doth not wake again!"
Then comes a sound of rushing through
the air,
And the baked sands drink up the plashing
rain;
Sleep soaks our souls in answer to our
prayer; —
And, marvelous! the next day life is plain,
Easy and simple, profitable and fair.

THE PERFECT DAY

THE PERFECT DAY

IT is so short a space 'twixt day and night!
Can ye not keep it spotless, heart and
brain?

Will ye not league to keep the scutcheon
bright

Of these few hours? Then, without one
stain,

Bearing the blazon of a heavenly light,
Thou shalt be hung aloft, O perfect day,
In my dark halls of life, — and to my sight
Shalt gleam a star, to show me what I
may.

SINS OF OMISSION

THAT deed I should have compassed
yesterday

Did grow and grow, till like a weight it
lay

Upon me, — though I turned and went
my way.

SOUL AND SENSE

But not to safety, for around my bed
All the undone doth gather, and like lead
Will on my coffin weigh, when I am dead;

And nailing me within, with deathly stress,
Will keep from me the sun of righteousness,
Which may not enter through, my sleep to
bless.

FAILURE

SET the pale mark of failure on my
brow
When I am dead.

Those who have won, the garland's grace
may show,

But not my head.

I never touched achievement, still it fled;
And what I wrought I did not see nor
know.

Set the pale mark of failure on my brow,
And let me go.

DEJECTION

DEJECTION

LIKE to a bird with broken wings
Is my soul,
Which cannot rise from earthly things
To view the whole.

When it would rise its poor wings trail, —
Alas, poor soul! —
It sees but one pool and the sedges pale,
Not the whole.

LIFE COMES TO SOME

LIFE comes to some with aspect bright,
Her hair ablaze
With jewels' rays,
And in her cincture gleaming jets of light.

To some with halting step and slow,
With tangled hair,
And eyes astare
For what is not, she comes, and will not go.

SOUL AND SENSE

HEAVEN AND HELL

SHALL I seek Heaven that I may find a
place
Where with my soul 't is well?
If I seek thus, though I may strive for
Heaven,
My face is set toward Hell.

IN YOUR MIND

IN your mind (now you will think me
fanciful),
In its bright, breezeless, and clarified at-
mosphere,
Sit I and muse as in a sunlit garden,
Or like a god move blissful to and fro.

Never a day, passed mid that garden's
loveliness,
Love-sharp eyes scanning its beauty nar-
rowly,
Wandering under its sun-translucent foli-
age,
Never, my love, found I a single weed.

ALONE

ALONE

I

THOU art alone, my sister? Dost thou
guess
The meaning of such loneliness as thine?
It is as if there towered a soaring pine
Amid a vast and tangled wilderness
Of lesser growth. Aloft, mid strain and
stress
Of weather, doth it rear its tapering, fine,
And haughty peak. And how, without
some sign,
Should creeping things suspect its loneliness?
How should they dream of pangs, to them
unknown,
That rend in growth each gently swaying
limb?
And how conceive the strange, insistent
moan
Of winds that stir such lofty branches dim?
Earthward they look; while full of mystery,
And skyward pointing, towers the stately
tree.

SOUL AND SENSE

II

But comes there not a time in which the
wind
Breathes music softly for the pine-tree's own
Enchanted hearing? When for it alone
The clouds their splendid, fleecy locks un-
bind
And spread them out in air? And though
they find
It ever soaring, while the world lies prone,
'T is as the monarch is upon his throne,
His solitary griefs with joys combined. —
Alone with wind and clouds, the lesser
mould
May not attain thy height, but thou o'er
them
Canst bend thy boughs and whisper.
Mighty-souled,
Tell them of wind and clouds; offer thy
stem
If they would climb; — and find it good
to be
That which thou art, O solitary tree.

ONE WAY OF TRUSTING

ONE WAY OF TRUSTING

NOT trust you, dear? Nay, 't is not true.

As sailors trust the shifting sea
From day to day, so I trust you.

They know how smooth the sea can be;
And well they know its treachery

When tempests blow; yet forth they
thrust

Their ships, as in security. —

They trust it, dear, because they must.

AGNOSTICS

YE led by hands ye cannot see
To heights ye cannot know,
Who call your Godhead, Destiny,
And deem the soul's futurity

May, or may not, be so; —
Are *ye* our saints? Are *ye* the men
To make our Israel whole again?

SOUL AND SENSE

At least the dear old fables taught
Of hope, and Heaven, and love;
And taught so well that men have wrought
And battled; — for a thing of naught?
Nay, God be judge above!
Within the balance of the Lord,
Their deeds are weightier than your word.

THE HEART OF THE CHRISTIAN TOWN

I AM held by a thought in a dungeon
deep,
Deep under the earth. In a certain town,
Where traffic and roar infect the air,
Where the fresh, salt wind, that fain would
sweep
Straight to the river, is laden down
With all pollution, I saw a pair —
Pitiful pair — of babies sit,
Back from the street, in a doorway dim,
On a tenement threshold cold and bare,
Stifling each his sobbing fit,
Fearful each lest he cry aloud,
And draw the curse or the blow on him.

RETRIBUTION

And the thought that holds me fast-bound,
down
Under the earth in a dungeon grim,
Is that these two knew the heart of the
crowd,
In the very midst of the Christian town.

RETRIBUTION

FALSE, false, false.
Wealth have ye and your brothers lie
in the straw;
Knowledge have ye and your brothers
grope in the dark;
Leisure have ye and your brothers are
bound to the wheel;
O false, false, false!

False, false, false.
Down from your painted couches into the
street,
Into the grimy square. In the glare of day,
Shall ye not stoop to reap that ye have
sown?
O false, false, false!

SOUL AND SENSE

PEACE

PEACE, peace.
But where?
Everywhere.
In the air;
In torrent's roar,
And brook's soft sweep;
In things that soar,
And things that creep;
Where gardens bloom,
In desert sand;
Where pine-trees gloom,
Where vineyards stand;
In crowded street,
On trackless hill;
In motions fleet,
And trances still;
In sailing clouds,
And ocean's green;
In chilly shrouds,
And bright eyes' sheen;
In noontide bright,
And darkest night; —
Peace, peace.

AN ORACLE

But where?
Everywhere
To him who reads aright.

AN ORACLE

TREMBLING weakly beneath the burden of worthily living,
Came to the angel of Fate a struggling soul,
where, sphinx-like,
Solemn, the angel sat, regarding the past
and the future.

Wearily murmured the soul: "Dost see
my burden, O angel?
Crushed 'neath this weight, in my woe, behold how I falter and stumble;
How may I lighten my load?" — "By
love," the angel made answer.

"Loving is all my pain," the soul sighed out; "'neath the sorrow,
Anguish of others I bow. And what may
I add to my living
To lighten so grievous a load?" — "More
love," the angel made answer.

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